

Recent Studies Linking Sleeping Pills and Dementia Ignore the Impact of Sleep Apnoea

There was widespread reporting last month on a Harvard University study linking sleeping pills to dementia, but this and other similar studies fail to take into account the well established link between sleep apnoea and dementia.

This link is well documented, and a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association last year found that, "women who have breathing problems during sleep were up to 50 per cent more likely to develop cognitive impairment or dementia than women who sleep normally."

The important factor missing here is that sleeping pills suppress the respiratory centres, causing the onset of apnoeas, which in turn leads to the increased risk of dementia. The sleeping pills are therefore indirectly responsible for the increased incidence of dementia, so cutting out the pills will only be effective if the patient is not already suffering from sleep apnoea.



Dementia is one of the biggest burdens facing the NHS. Some experts believe the cost of caring for patients will rise to £35 billion annually within the next two decades. There are currently 800,000 Britons with

dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. We therefore need more research into the link between sleep apnoea and dementia, and to start testing all elderly people for sleep apnoea as a preventative measure.

New Harley Street Clinic Now Open!

Michael Oko has established a Sleeping Disorders Centre clinic at London's most respected medical address to cater for private patients in need of diagnosis and treatment for sleep apnoea and other sleep disorders

Clinics on Fridays and Saturdays
Call 0203 0753 150 to arrange an appointment
Or book online at: www.150harleyst.com/michael-oko

ENT at 150, 150 Harley Street, London W1G 7LQ



Extra Hour in Bed Provides Little Relief for UK Women

As the clocks turned back and British Summer Time (BST) came to an end, millions across the UK enjoyed the benefit of an extra hour in bed. But for many women, this extra hour provided little relief, with a growing number now being diagnosed with Sleep Apnoea.

Traditionally viewed as a man's disease, a recent study has suggested that among women aged 20-44, up to one quarter now have sleep apnoea, a figure which rises to more than half in women aged between 45 and 54, and 75 per cent in women aged between 55 and 70.

Whilst women have often been viewed as the 'gatekeepers' to their families' health, and are often the first to recognise the signs and symptoms of sleep disorders in their husbands or bed-partners, increasingly they're experiencing this debilitating disease for themselves, with symptoms including loud snoring, day time tiredness, poor concentration, headaches, depression and anxiety."

With mounting evidence of sleep apnoea's links to serious medical conditions, including cardiovascular disease and dementia, it's vital that we move past the stereotypes that label OSA a 'man's disease' and seek to raise awareness of this potentially deadly disease amongst women in the UK.



Write to Your MP About Sleep Apnoea!

The British Lung Foundation is running a campaign to raise awareness of sleep apnoea. In their 10-point OSA Charter, they call on governments across the UK to take action so that people with OSA and their families get the support and treatment they need.

You can help to make a difference! by completing this [online form](#) on the BLFs website, you can tell your elected representative why it is important to take action on OSA to bring about earlier and better rates of diagnosis, and to secure better care and treatment for all those with the condition.

The OSA Charter

The British Lung Foundation believes that people with OSA and their families have a right to:

1. OSA screening, through primary care wherever possible;
2. a speedy and accurate diagnosis in a sleep clinic, wherever they live in the UK;
3. access to appropriate treatment and to a comprehensive specialist sleep service if needed, wherever they live in the UK;
4. appropriate information and ongoing support for the management of the condition, according to agreed national standards and provided by suitably qualified and trained staff; and
5. timely and relevant information on the implications of an OSA diagnosis for vigilance-critical job roles, and fast-tracking for diagnosis and treatment if people with OSA drive for a living.

Calls on governments across the UK to:

6. make OSA a national priority;
7. increase awareness of the symptoms and dangers of, and issues that surround, OSA among medical professionals, employers, the general public and those at greatest risk;
8. ensure collection of comprehensive data to enable commissioners and service planners to provide effective services; and
9. encourage investment in research, including clinical trials, recognising the potential cost savings and improvements to quality of life that could be made.

And encourages employers to:

10. arrange for all staff who are employed as drivers or in other vigilance-critical roles to be screened for OSA.